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ABSTRACT

The learning package on purchasing clothes is designed for use by instructors in adult consumer-homemaking programs, with the target population generally being adults in socioeconomically disadvantaged innercity and rural areas. Major topics include: government regulations related to care and labeling of fabrics and garments, wardrobe planning, garment purchasing, and the use of accessories. Instructor assistance is provided in planning objectives, creating learning experiences, and appraising learnings. Directions also are given for preparing and using transparencies for the overhead projector. Instructor references include: pamphlets, periodicals, audiovisual aids, and a source list. (EA)

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● HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION

TIPS ON PURCHASING CLOTHES

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FOREWORD

Consumer-homemaking programs are designed to help meet the needs of individuals living in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. These programs encompass the range of topics generally associated with home economics education. Attendance is voluntary, and sustained attendance is dependent upon the ability of the activities to satisfy individual needs. Many of the participants have lost faith in formal education; thus, the methods, techniques, and materials that are used need to be innovative and selective in terms of their appropriateness for specific individuals.

The development of materials designed to help individuals improve their effectiveness as they work with participants in local consumer-homemaking programs in the State was initiated by the late Laura M. Ehman and completed under the direction of Elizabeth A. Brown, Chief of the Bureau of Home Economics Education. The purpose of this publication is to provide supervisors and instructors with teaching materials on the buying of clothes in order that participants might be able to improve their shopping skills.

The basic materials for this learning package were developed for a pilot program conducted by the Rochester City School District. The Rochester materials were adapted into their present form by Janet E. Popp, associate in the Bureau of Home Economics Education. The manuscript was prepared for publication by Nelson S. Maurer, associate in the Bureau of Continuing Education Curriculum Development.

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OVERVIEW

This learning package on purchasing clothes is designed for use by instructors in adult consumer-homemaking programs. The target population for these programs is generally adults in socioeconomically disadvantaged innercity and rural areas. Major topics in this publication include government regulations related to care and labeling of fabrics and garments, wardrobe planning, garment purchasing, and the use of accessories.

The different sections of the learning package are explained below.

Objectives. Behavior that is stated in terms of the accomplishments that the participant is expected to achieve at the conclusion of the unit.

Motivating Procedure. A learning activity that is planned to arouse a participant's interest in the topic.

Learning Experiences. Activities that are developed to help the participants achieve the stated objectives. Many of the references noted in the various learning experiences are included in the learning package.

Appraising Learnings. Suggested activities that are designed to assist the instructor in evaluating how well the participants have achieved the objectives for the unit.

Instructor References. Selected books, pamphlets, articles from periodicals, films, and filmstrips that relate to the subject of purchasing clothes are listed.

At the end of the unit, there are materials which may be duplicated and distributed as handout items or used to make overhead transparencies. Directions for making overhead transparencies from printed masters may be found on page 16.

A Source List has been included that gives the name and address of places from which possible resource materials may be obtained.

The topic of purchasing clothes may be introduced several ways. Be alert to conversation among the participants that might indicate they are having problems related to buying clothes. The instructor can indicate his willingness to help and he may suggest that the group could consider the problem together. Each participant has experiences to share. Be sure to take advantage of these experiences and to include as many participants as possible when discussing the selection and purchasing of clothes.

PURCHASING CLOTHES

When the consumer buys clothes today, he is constantly confronted with new fabrics and finishes. Many times these new fabrics have characteristics which lend themselves to special uses and also require specific methods of care. Government regulations have been designed to help the consumer by requiring informative labels to be attached to all garments. These labels give the percent of each fiber in the fabric and ways of caring for the clothes. Knowing the composition of the fabric helps to indicate how the garment will behave in use. In order to purchase clothes wisely, the consumer needs to be able to interpret the labels on garments and to plan, select, and buy clothes considering fit, quality, durability, need, and cost.

Objectives

When the participant completes this topic of instruction, he will be able:

- to use information given on garment labels to make decisions when purchasing clothes
- to identify various weaves and finishes and explain how they affect garment use
- to plan and select clothes for different occasions considering need, fashion, wearability, quality, care, fit, and cost
- to identify desirable construction features and explain how these features affect the use, care, quality, and cost of clothes
- to select clothing that will minimize figure problems
- to select accessories that enhance a basic costume for a specific situation
- to select the best method for purchasing clothes based upon his current economic situation

Motivating Procedure

Collect a number of clothing hang tags or labeled garments and distribute at least one tag or garment to each participant. Ask participants to identify the characteristics they would expect from the fabric described by their tag or label and to give any other helpful information that might be provided by the manufacturer. Ascertain from the group how many read and use the labels they find on the clothes they buy.

Learning Experiences

- Discuss the information a consumer should find on hang tags or labels attached to ready-to-wear garments. Use the transparency with overlay, What Can the Label Tell You, found on pages 18 and 19 or develop a chart to identify the information which is required by law to be on clothing labels. Include such items as brand name, size, fiber generic names, fiber trade names, percent of each fiber in the fabric, fiber content of the lining and interlinings, country of origin of imported materials, and care information. The directions for making a transparency may be found on page 16.
  Discuss additional information that may be included voluntarily by the manufacturer, such as properties of the fabric, finishes used, guaranteed performance, wear-dated programs, and licensed trademarks. Use such references as *Textile Label Language; Shoppers' Handbook; Flammable Fabrics; Permanent Care Labeling;* and *Fabric Finishes for Beauty, Service, Protection.*

- Discuss the generic names, trade names, uses, and care of the various fibers commonly used in the manufacture of clothes. Present the information in chart form, either as an overhead transparency or on the chalkboard. Develop a take-home item that summarizes the information discussed. Use such references as the *Shoppers' Handbook; Textile Label Language;* and *Fabric Finishes for Beauty, Service, Protection.*

- Discuss the care information that is required to be attached to all ready-to-wear garments. Ask participants to share experiences they have had in using care label information. Prepare and distribute the factsheet, Permanent Care Labeling. Use such references as *Care Labels; Permanent Care Labeling;* the filmstrip, *Permanent Care Labels;* and 35 mm slides, *Flammability Standards.*

- Discuss how the charges for drycleaning may increase the cost of garments that need such care. Develop a worksheet to compare the maintenance cost of a garment that must be drycleaned with one that can be laundered. Estimate the life of the garment and calculate the amount the drycleaning charges add to the original cost of the item. Emphasize the importance of considering maintenance costs when selecting garments.

- Display fabrics that have various types of weaves and finishes. Discuss each item in terms of intended use, wearability, care, and cost. Use such references as *Fabric Finishes for Beauty, Service, Protection; Facts About Fabrics;* and the film, *Dressing by Design: Texture.*

- Display pictures that illustrate current fashions, fads, and styles of clothing. Explain the meaning of the terms and show how each one may affect a person's choice of clothes. Next, consider how peer pressure, need for individuality, and money budgeted for clothes also influences an individual's choice of clothing. Use such references as *Selecting Fashions, Selecting Teen Fashions,* and the filmstrips, *Young Fashion Forecast* and *Clothing Communicates.*

- Prepare a bulletin board that shows clothing suitable for various occasions and for different members of the family. Discuss how to plan a wardrobe considering such factors as needs, garments on hand, and money budgeted for clothes. Explain also how age and type of activities influence the clothes needed by an individual. Help each participant to develop a chart that shows the activities in which he participates, the clothes he currently has in his wardrobe, and the additional items he needs. Suggest that participants have each member of their family make a similar chart. Then, use this information to identify the priority items that may be purchased for the family from the clothing budget. Use such references as *Selecting Fashions*, *Selecting Teen Fashions*, *Your Clothing Dollar*, the film, *Dressing by Design: Color and Wardrobe* and the filmstrip, *Your Wardrobe and You*. Assistance in budgeting may be found in *Tips on Consumerism*.

- Discuss desirable construction features consumers should look for when buying clothes. Use ready-to-wear garments to show different types of construction and point out how the type of construction affects the use, care, quality, durability, and cost of clothes. Have participants identify what they should look for when they buy such items as sleepwear, lingerie, work shirts and pants, sportswear, and party dresses. Summarize the topic by assisting participants to formulate lists of construction features they should look for when buying different types of clothing. Use such references as *The Voice of Clothing*, *How to Select Young Underfashions*, and *Clothing for the Elderly*.

- Invite a buyer for a children's department to discuss the features a person should look for when buying clothes for children, such as design of the garment; self-help, growth, and safety features; workmanship; care requirements; personality of the child; and cost. Use such references as *How to Select Infants' and Children's Clothing; Children's Shoes; Buying by Size, Not Age; Buying Clothes for Small Children; Clothing for Children;* and the 35 mm slides, *Clothing for Little People*.

- Discuss how figure problems affect a person's selection of clothes. Use silhouettes to show how line and design can be used to minimize different types of figure problems. Ask participants to share ways that can be used to minimize figure problems. Use such references as *Selecting Fashions; Selecting Teen Fashions; Styles that Look Good Make You Feel Good; Garment Alterations; Clothing for the Elderly;* and the films, *Dressing by Design: Silhouette*, and *Dressing by Design: Line*.

- Invite a representative of a men's clothing store to bring in a variety of clothes such as jackets, trousers, and shirts and to discuss the construction features that affect the quality, wearability, care, and price of clothes. Use such a reference as *Young Man Take a Clothes Look!*

- Have participants describe or role play several situations that illustrate impulse buying and rational decisionmaking, such as buying a fad type party dress and buying children's clothes at the end of the season. Discuss reactions and formulate a list of good buying practices to follow when buying clothes.

- Discuss and illustrate how accessory items such as belts, scarves, ties, handbags, hats, and gloves may be used to achieve various effects with a basic costume for both men and women.

- Discuss various methods of paying for clothes including the cost of each method. Develop a chart that lists the different methods, advantages and disadvantages of each, and common interest and carrying charges. Illustrate with a problem how much a garment would cost using each method of payment and point out when each method might be appropriate.

Appraising Learnings

- Distribute to each participant a clothing hang tag or a labeled garment. Ask each person to indicate the characteristics of the garment described and tell how they would care for it.

- Show transparencies or garments with different weaves and finishes. Have participants explain the advantages and/or disadvantages of each weave and finish.

- Ask participants to periodically share their experiences in following their wardrobe plan and budget for themselves and their family.

- Display garments or pictures of garments with a variety of construction features. Have participants explain why they would or would not purchase each item. Some examples might include adjustable features on children's clothes, current fad items, narrow seams, and mismatching of a plaid pattern.

- Have each participant select a silhouette and pick out wardrobe styles that would enhance that figure. Pattern books, actual garments, or drawings could be used to illustrate the styles to use that would minimize the figure problem and improve the silhouette.

- Ask several participants to wear or model a basic costume. Provide a variety of accessories such as jewelry, scarves, ties, belts, hats, and purses and have participants select those items which would make the basic costume appropriate for different occasions. Have the other participants comment on the results and suggest other changes that could be made.

- Present several methods of purchasing a clothing item, such as layaway, 30-day credit, revolving charge account. Have participants determine the actual cost of purchasing the item using various methods and state the situations under which it would be appropriate to use each method.

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Your wardrobe and you. 63 frames. silent. Purchase - Household Finance Corp.

PREPARING AND USING TRANSPARENCIES

The overhead projector is a flexible classroom teaching device. It gives the instructor maximum freedom to adapt the material being used to the needs and interests of the group by letting him control the pace, emphasis, and sequence of the presentation. Because the projector is positioned in front of the class, the instructor is able to maintain a more effective rapport with students, observe their reactions, and lead group discussions more effectively.

The overhead projector is an excellent device to use to present a complex concept or process. Colorful transparencies with multiple overlays break complicated events into comprehensible units and easily show the interrelationships among the different parts. By using a blank transparency and felt tipped pens or grease pencils, the instructor can develop, ahead of time or with the class, multicolored diagrams and charts which might ordinarily be placed on the chalkboard. The following suggestions are presented to help instructors plan and produce their own original transparencies.

- Keep the content of the transparency simple.
- Plan the transparency for horizontal projection.
- Use letters and symbols that are at least one-quarter of an inch high. Produce attractive titles or labels with dry-transfer letters.
- Leave three-quarters of an inch margin on all sides of transparency.
- Use color to make the transparency attractive, but only enough color for emphasis.
- Use multiple overlays (one transparency over another) for the development of a concept or to show steps. Attach overlays to the sides of the mount with tape or special transparency hinges.
- Use a sliding or hinged mask to control the rate of disclosure when more than one step is included on a transparency.
- Place the completed transparency in a special mount. Fasten the film to the mount with pressure-sensitive tape.

MAKING THERMOCOPY TRANSPARENCIES

The masters included in this publication can be quickly and easily made into transparencies for overhead projection by the use of the thermal copy process. The process is simple but does require a special copying machine. These machines are widely distributed, so if the center does not have one, it should not be difficult to locate one that can be used.

To make a transparency follow the directions for the specific thermocopy machine you are using. In general, these directions include the following steps:

1. Set the exposure dial for the appropriate density level in order to get a good transparency.

2. Place a specially coated sheet of transparency film over the master. Be sure the notch of the film is in the upper right-hand corner.

3. Insert both the special film and the master into the exposure opening of the copying machine with the film side up.

   If the transparency is too light, set the exposure dial to a darker setting. If the transparency is too dark, set the exposure dial to a lighter setting. If the image from the reverse side of the master appears, move the exposure dial to a lighter setting.

4. Mount the completed transparency in a special cardboard mount. The mount serves to protect the film, provides a place to hinge any overlays that are used, gives space for writing notes, and makes handling and storing easier. Fasten the film to the mount with pressure-sensitive tape.

   Overlays are attached to the top side of the mount with tape or special overhead transparency hinges. When overlays are to be projected in the same order each time, they all may be hinged to the same edge of the mount. If the presentation order varies from time to time, attach each overlay to a different edge of the mount. After attaching the overlay, check its position to be sure that it is properly alined with the base transparency.

SOURCE LIST

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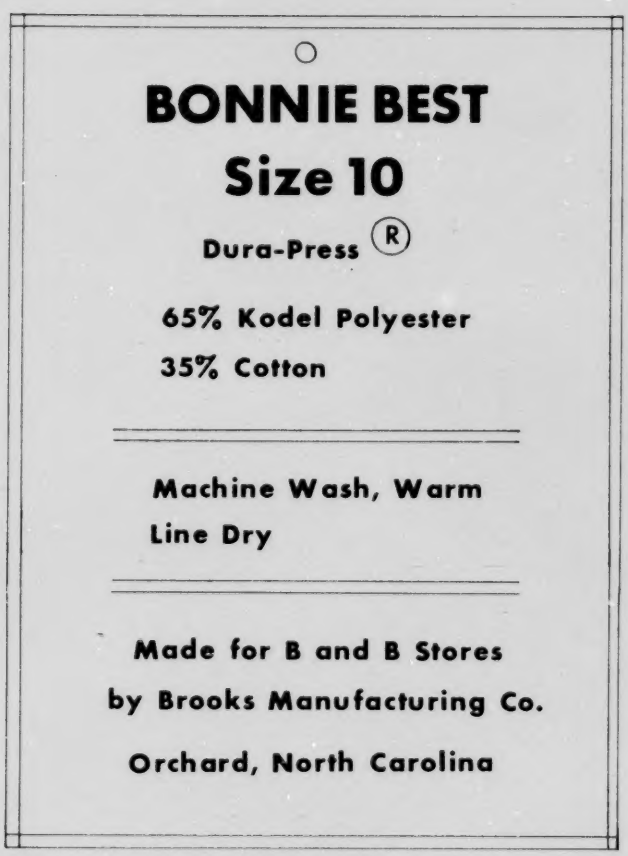
APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

WHAT CAN THE LABEL TELL YOU?



Always Read the Label Information when Selecting Clothes.

APPENDIX 2

PERMANENT CARE LABELING

The Permanent Care Labeling Rule requires manufacturers to attach labels to ready-to-wear garments and supply coded labels for piece goods which indicates how to care for the article or fabric. The following chart explains the common terminology found on garment labels.

WHEN THE LABEL SAYS	THE CUSTOMER SHOULD		
	Set washer at	Set dryer at	Line dry
Machine wash, hot	Regular cycle hot water	Regular	Yes
Machine wash, warm	Regular cycle warm water	Regular	Yes
Machine wash, warm; line dry	Regular cycle warm water	No	Yes
Machine wash, warm, gentle; tumble dry, low	Gentle cycle warm water	Low	Yes
Hand wash; line dry	No	No	Yes
Hand wash; dry flat	No	No	No
Dryclean only	No	No	No
Wipe with damp cloth only	No	No	No

The word "No" above indicates a prohibited procedure.

The above wash water settings approximate the following ranges:

Hot - 130° - 150° F. Hand - 80° - 100° F.

Warm - 90° - 100° F. Cold - under 80° F.

Other terms for "Regular" include: Automatic Dry, Timed Dry, Special Normal.

A gentle or delicate cycle indicates low speed agitation and shorter washing periods or permanent press cycle on dryer.

In some instances the following additional terms will be used.

Do not bleach

Do not use chlorine bleach

Do not twist or wring

Remove before fully dry

Wash inside out

Do not iron

Use cool iron

Furrier clean only

Leather clean only

Do not dryclean

Wash separately

Remove trim